

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Patent Application No. 09/855,142

Confirmation No. 1124

Applicant: Lincoln et al.

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Commissioner for Patents
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SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW AND COMMENTS

Sir:

Applicants thank Examiner Choudhury for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representatives, Pamela J. Ruschau and David Keston, during the telephone interview of June 25, 2009. The remarks set forth in the Interview Summary dated July 6, 2009 reflect the general discussion during the telephone interview. Applicants offer the additional comments regarding the substance of the interview and the differences between the cited references and the pending claims.

Two independent claims are pending in this application, claim 6 being directed to a method and claim 9 being directed to a system. Claim 6 is presently pending as follows, claim 9 reflecting structure based upon the same.

6. (Previously presented). A method of responding to an information request from a client device, the method including the steps of:

- receiving the information request from the client device;
- wrapping the information request in at least one layer to produce a request object;
- transmitting the request object over a distributed network comprising a plurality of processing nodes; and

at a first of said processing nodes, performing analysis of the information request stored on the request object to determine whether the first processing node is able to process the information request and generate at least part of a response data which is responsive to said information request, and adding a routing layer to the request object containing routing information relating to a next stage in processing of the request object whilst leaving said at least one layer of the request object intact and undisturbed, said first processing node determining the routing information contained in the routing layer in dependence upon only the request object content;

at a second of said processing nodes, performing analysis of the information request stored on the request object to determine whether the first processing node is able to process the information request and generate at least part of a response data which is responsive to said information request;

at least one of said first and second processing nodes processing the information request in the request object and generating at least part of the response data which is responsive to said request object; and

transmitting back to the client device via the distributed network said request object, including said response data, for responding to the information request;

wherein the request object further includes said information request.

A first important difference between the Reed (and Hart) citations is in the paragraph beginning "at a first of said processing nodes, processing analysis" The Examiner states in the interview summary that Reed teaches a form of encapsulation of data packets (for the purpose of routing a packet payload). Even if this routing in Reed might be argued to correspond to the method step of "adding a routing layer," however, the passage in the claim requires that it BOTH perform analysis AND add a routing layer. Applicants submit that the same routing task in Reed cannot simultaneously satisfy the analysis step and the routing step.

Furthermore, the substeps of the analysis step in the identified passage have no analogous counterparts in the Reed document. Rather, Reed appears not to even suggest the need for a substep of determining ability of the node to process inasmuch as Reed relates to routing and routing alone. Moreover, there is no obvious analog for the substep of determining ability of the node to generate at least a part of a response data; with regard to

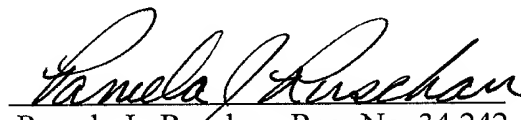
Reed, there is no need to determine whether a node is able to generate a response if there is nothing that can be considered to constitute a response.

A second important difference lies in the nature of the result of the operation of the method in the independent claims - a request goes out to a number of different nodes in response to which at least one of the nodes processes the request and generates response data in the request object. This is called variously an "asynchronous request" and a "request which may not be satisfied within a single session or by a single information provider" in the specification of the pending application. As explained in the specification, in one exemplary embodiment, Applicants could use XML to generate a structured form for encapsulating information from different sources. Neither Hart nor Reed has this result "in scope" - they are both concerned with the minutiae of ensuring that a data payload is delivered securely. In the case of Reed, the connections between nodes are anonymised, replacing TCP/IP socket connections.

In summary, as set forth in the interview, Applicants submit that the claims as pending are not anticipated or rendered obvious over the cited references, either alone or in combination. Accordingly, an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a further interview would be of assistance in placing the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at 312-616-5600.

Again, Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the interview, and his consideration of the comments in the interview and herein

Respectfully submitted,



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